

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM  
RELEASE AS SANITIZED

RYBAT/PBSUCCESS

REPORTED BOMB DROPS ON HONDURAS - 22 JUNE 1954

~~SECRET~~

RYBAT/PBSUCCESS

2003

REFS: A. C ] 480 D. SHERWOOD 339 G. SHERWOOD 359  
B. C ] 003 E. SHERWOOD 341 H. SHERWOOD 335  
C. C ] 686 F. SHERWOOD 358 I. LINC 4200

1. Ref H dated 22 June stated the following: FROM BRODFROST: BELIEVE [ ] WILL PROVIDE US 2 AT/6 ON EITHER LOAN OR PURCHASE DEAL. CADICK STATES [ ] KEEPS HIS P/38 IN AIR READY TO GO. JUST LOOKING FOR EXUSE TO TAP GUAT. IN EVENT CALLIGERIS ARMY STARTS TO FOLD WE HAVE CAPABILITY PROVIDE [ ] WITH EXCUSE. WE CAN PAINT GUAT MARKINGS ON 2 AT/6 AND DROP BOMBS ON [ ] (NEAR MISS ON MILITARY AREA) BELIEVE THIS WOULD DO IT. AT/6 WOULD RETURN MANA ISOLATED STRIP AND MANA MARKINGS REPLACED. LINC replied to SHERWOOD (Ref I) on 22 June: 1. DESTROY ALL COPIES THIS MSG AND DISCOURAGE THIS TYPE OF DISCUSSION. 2. FOR SHERWOOD: COMPLY AS PER ABOVE.

2. Ref A states that the Honduranian Foreign Minister reported that "three bombs, one a dud were dropped on San Pedro De Copan, Honduras, at 1300 June 22 by a Guatemalan plane." This is further elaborated upon by Ref C which states that "two or three water filled practice bombs loaded with a small charge were dropped from an unidentified single engine aircraft near runway at San Pedro De Copan. Bombs did explode making crater three feet wide and six inches deep. Another bomb approximately 250 lbs. minus fuse of fins landed unexploded." Ref B states that the Naval Attache, Tegucigalpa, had the dud in his possession and it reportedly was sent to Washington for examination. LINCOLN has heard no results of this examination.

3. On this same day, June 22, SOMERSET fighter mission F-8 (Ref D) was airborne at 1120 with a mission of armed recon of Chiquimula area, carrying three - 250 lb. bombs. The after mission reports (Refs E and F) stated that the weather in the target area was very bad but the pilot found a small hole near Zacapa and attempted to knock out bridge but all three bombs were duds. Subsequent rechecking with pilot as result of LINCOLN query brought forth following statement (Ref G) "PILOT STATES NO QUESTION HIS POSITION OVER ZACAPA DEFINITELY NOT OVER COPAN, HONDURAS."

4. The above facts have been verified by debriefing of all air support personnel and it is agreed that there are two possible explanations of the reported bombings:

- A. A WSBURNT or other non-PBSUCCESS A/C dropped the bombs - or
- B. A PBSUCCESS pilot, unfamiliar with the terrain and lost in bad weather mistook San Pedro De Copan for a legitimate WSBURNT target.

Pending further word on the origin of the recovered dud bomb it is impossible to state which of the two possible explanations is the more likely.

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